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U. S. Department of Agriculture

United States Department of Agriculture
Office of Information

AND-16-41

Feb. 28, 1941

Part I - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

SUMMARY OF CABLES ON FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: ARGENTINA: The Cotton Board confirmed the sale of 120,000 bales of cotton to the Spanish Government. The sale was on credit, and payment is to be made quarterly over a 2-year period. By means of the sale the Argentine Government has disposed of almost all of the exportable surplus from the 1940 crop. The cotton for the most part is low grade and represents cotton against which the Argentine Government has made loans at the rate of 500 pesos per metric ton (6.8 cents per pound). Indications are that the British Government has approved the transaction and that the Spanish Government has vessels available to transport the cotton. It is probable that similar credits will be arranged for wheat and meat.

The Grain Board announced new prices at which it will sell old-crop corn previously purchased by the Board from growers. The prices for corn on farms, when sold for domestic use, range from one Argentine peso per 100 kilograms (7.6 cents per bushel) for ear corn on farms situated within 50 kilometers of the port of shipping, to 40 centavos (3 cents per bushel) for corn located beyond 200 kilometers of the port. The selling price for shelled corn on the cars at Buenos Aires has been reduced to 3.125 pesos per 100 kilograms, (23.6 cents per bushel) and prices at other ports have been adjusted accordingly. These prices, which apply only to corn sold for home consumption, are far below the prices paid for the corn by the Board, and are indicative of the desire of the Board to liquidate its stocks in view of the large new crop in prospect.

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Part II - FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

SECRETARY WICKARD AND RALPH BARTON PERRY THIS WEEK IN A NATIONAL Farm and Home Hour broadcast touched off a discussion program which will be carried to rural community centers the country over. The topic will be: HOW TO DEFEND OUR DEMOCRACY. "I am convinced," said Secretary Wickard, "that if rural Americans will take time to think about democracy — and discuss it with their neighbors — they will reach sound conclusions on what it is we are defending and how we may defend it best."

THE PLAN FOR CARRYING DISCUSSIONS ON DEMOCRACY TO RURAL CENTERS was started at a meeting of representatives of farm organizations, Land-Grant Colleges, Office of Education, and the American Council of Education. This group was called by Chester Davis, NDAC Agricultural Commissioner, to consult with him and USDA officials. The group asked that study material be made available and that the Department assist in getting a discussion program under way similar in subject matter to a series of lectures on Democracy given for Department personnel two years ago. These lectures were arranged by M. L. Wilson, then Under Secretary. Now, as Director of Extension, and with the State Extension Services taking the leading part, he will guide the Nation-wide program. Following the request for material, Secretary Wickard, in his address before the Land-Grant College meeting in Chicago last fall, announced that he would call in a group of scholars to lay the foundation for the discussions on Democracy. This group was called together on January 29.

A STATEMENT ON THE MORAL ISSUES IN THE PRESENT CONFLICT, which defines and contrasts democracy and totalitarianism, together with some leading questions on the meaning and practice of democracy, was prepared by the scholars. Copies will be distributed at an early date. In the group were Frederick A. Middlebush, President of the University of Missouri, chairman; Archibald MacLeish, Librarian, Library of Congress; James C. Derieux, Editor, "The State"; Dwight Sanderson, Professor of Sociology, Cornell University; Ralph Barton Perry, Professor of Sociology, Harvard University; Charles Soursen Johnson, Fiske University; Edmund deS. Brunner, Professor of Sociology, Columbia University; A. E. Avey, Professor of Philosophy, Ohio State University; W. T. Stone, Foreign Policy Association; and Director Wilson.

IN A CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 31, A Land-Grant College committee, headed by Director I. O. Schaub, of North Carolina, suggested and laid plans for a series of regional meetings to discuss program plans. Most of these regional meetings have been held. In addition to the leadership of the Federal and State Extension groups, similar programs will be carried to the rural areas by the Office of Education and farm organizations. In organizing discussion groups, and in providing additional material, BAE's Program Study and Discussion Division stands ready to assist.

The discussions on the Farm and Home Hour will continue through March with rural groups appearing in a series of programs.

On Tuesday, March 11, a farm group from Virginia will discuss with another farm group from Iowa what farm people in their areas are thinking and saying about their obligations as citizens in a Democracy. On Tuesday, March 18, a similar discussion will be held by groups from Vermont and Arkansas. The last of the series will bring Minnesota and Colorado groups on the air on Tuesday, March 25.

RUBBER NURSERY STARTED IN VERACRUZ PROVINCE OF MEXICO: Another of the BPI rubber survey parties returned to Washington last week from Veracruz, Mexico, after starting an experimental rubber nursery at Palmar. Working with a party of Mexican scientists, the group found two places in Mexico that offered some promise of commercial rubber cultivation. This party also made surveys in Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Salvador. Two other groups still are in the field. One party left Saturday from Panama for surveys in Haiti and Santo Domingo. The other party is due out of the lower regions of the Amazon some time in March.

UNITED KINGDOM: Discussions on the new proposed cotton control measures are still in progress. If the Ministry of Supply becomes the sole raw cotton importer, private merchanting will cease and hedging will be eliminated by Government underwriting of price risks. Strong representations apparently are being made to the Cotton Controller to modify the proposed new policy in order to preserve existing marketing machinery.

ARGENTINA: The Argentine Government has authorized loans to cotton growers for the 1941 crop varying from 300 to 750 pesos per metric ton (4.1 to 10.1 cents per pound) depending on grade, with the cotton as collateral. The loan becomes due on August 31 but is subject to renewal.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS BUYING LAMBS' WOOL and low crossbreds. The allotment of freight space for the transportation of wool during March is much below shippers' requirements. Freight rates will be advanced to \$20 a ton on April 1.

EGYPT: The Government enacted legislation forbidding cotton-growing during the 1940-41 agricultural year on land already sown to beans, lentils, helba, flax and barley. The estimated reduction in the 1941-42 cotton crop through this legislation is placed at 500,000 to 600,000 cantars (105,000 to 125,000 bales).

MANCHURIA: Total purchases of 1940 crop soybeans by the Soybean Monopoly and its official collectors up to January 15 amounted to 2,550,000 metric tons from an estimated crop of 3,800,000 tons. However, a shortage of burlap is reported as causing a delay in arrivals from the interior and the situation is reported as serious due to fast-approaching warm weather. It is reliably reported that the export quota to Japan from the 1940 crop is between 900,000 and 1,000,000 tons of beans and 1,150,000 tons of soybean cake, representing the equivalent of 2,215,000 tons in terms of beans. These quotas, added to the German quota of 300,000 tons of beans, leaves little for export to other countries except at the expense of local consumption. It appears probable that a considerable proportion of the German quota will be shipped in the form of oil due to the scarcity of burlap required for beans.

